

AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION

Please amend the specification as follows:

Please replace paragraph [003] with the following paragraph:

A¹
[0003] The administration of a Web site, and specifically a commerce Web site, often demands that information concerning a user of tools and facilities provided by the Web site be communicated between various administrative personnel. It is important that the delivery mechanism for such information be reliable and up-to-date, as the failure to communicate information, or the miscommunication of information, may have very serious consequences for a commerce Web site.

Please replace paragraph [0023] with the following paragraph:

A²
[0023] **Figure 1** is block diagram illustrating an exemplary Web-based commerce facility in the form of a network-based auction facility 10. While an exemplary embodiment of the present invention is described within the context of an auction facility, it will be appreciated by those skilled in the art that the invention will find application in many different types of computer-based, and network-based, commerce facilities.

Please replace paragraph [0025] with the following paragraph:

A³
[0025] The back-end services include a database engine server 22, a search index server 24 and a credit card database server 26, each of which maintains and facilitates access to a respective database. The back-end is also shown to include a number of administrative applications or functions 28 that ~~the~~ are described in further detail below.

Please replace paragraph [0027] with the following paragraph:

A⁴
[0027] **Figure 2** is a database diagram illustrating an exemplary database 23, ~~maintain~~

a4 maintained by and accessed via the database engine server 22, that at least partially implements and supports the auction facility 10. The database 23 is a relational database, and includes a number of tables having entries, or records, that are linked by indices and keys. Central to the database 23 is a user table 40, which contains a record for each user of the auction facility 10. A user may operate as a seller, buyer, or both, within the auction facility 10. The database 23 also includes item tables 42 that may be linked to the user table 40. Specifically, the item tables 42 include a seller items table 44 and data items table 46. A user record in the user table 40 may be linked to multiple items that are being, or have been, auctioned via the facility 10, a link indicating whether the user is a seller or a bidder (or buyer) with respect to items for which records exist within ~~in~~ the item tables 42. The database 23 also includes a note table 48 populated with note records that may be linked to one or more item records within the item tables 42 and/or to one or more user records within the user table 40. Each note record within the table 48 may include, *inter alia*, a comment, description, history or other information pertaining to an item being ~~action~~ auctioned via the auction facility 10, or to a user of the auction facility 10.

Please replace paragraph [0030] with the following paragraph:

a5 [0030] As described above with reference to **Figure 2**, user records 62 may be linked to one or more item records, the links indicating ~~within~~ whether the relevant user is a bidder or seller with respect to the relevant item or items. For example, in **Figure 3**, the user 4 is shown to be a seller of item 4, while user 1 is shown to be the seller of items 1 and 2, and a bidder for item 3. Accordingly, a one-to-many mapping, or linkage, may occur between user records and item records, and the links may either ~~the~~ be bidder or seller links.

Please replace paragraph [0033] with the following paragraph:

a⁶

[0033] Each of the administrative applications 28 may call a note Application Program Interface (API) 100 that embodies a note creation function 102, a note search function 104, and a note display function 105. The note creation function 102 facilitates the storage of notes as note records 60 including the data elements, or fields, described above. The note creation function 102 also allows note records 60 to be removed individually, or in a batch utilizing other criteria. The note creation function 102 also, in turn, calls one or more note creation User Interfaces (UI's) 106 that each present a number of input fields, for example corresponding to the fields of a note record 60, via which a user (e.g., an administrator) can input information to populate the fields of a note record 60. As mentioned above, respective sets of type information and subject information may be presented by a creation UI 106 as drop-down menus. A creation UI 106 may also perform a validation, or authentication, function by requiring an administrator to input a user ID and password that are validated before creation of a note record 60 utilizing information supplied via the relevant creation ~~URI~~ UI 106. In one embodiment, a creation UI 106 may (1) display an HTML form (e.g., add note.HTML) that presents a number of input fields, (2) perform a further validation operation of the user ID and password, as well as of other information that is being submitted (e.g., administrator or participant address information, subject information and type information), and (3) if the submitted information is all valid, communicate this information to the API 100 for storage as a note record 60 and display a confirmation screen to the relevant administrator. If the validation operation identifies any inputted information as being invalid or incorrect, this is communicated by the note creation UI 106 to the administrator.

Please replace paragraph [0036] with the following paragraph:

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[0036] At block 114, the note search function 104, via the search UI 108, displays textual information concerning a participant or item located by the search. At block 116, the

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note search function 104, again via the search UI 108, displays a note icon adjacent the displayed textual information to indicate that at least one note, embodied within a note record 60, is associated with the located participant or item. In one embodiment, where the search URI 108 displays the results of the search as an HTML document, the note icon may have a Uniform Resource Locator (URL) associated therewith with that specifies a web or directory path to a script (e.g., a CGI script) that invokes a note display function 105 embodied within the API 100.

Please replace paragraph [0041] with the following paragraph:

Q8
[0041] **Figure 7** illustrates an exemplary embodiment of an HTML page generated by the note search UI 108 that provides certain information regarding a participant located by the search string into the field 122 of the search ~~URI~~ UI 108 shown in **Figure 6**. An exemplary note icon 124, which is associated with a URL, is displayed adjacent the user ID of the located participant. The search UI 108 also displays an account balance (outstanding), and hypertext links to past and present auctions in which the participant participated as either a buyer or seller, to bids that the participant may have placed for items and to an alias history. The UI 108 also provides an indication whether the participant is a "top seller" within the auction facility 10. Finally, the UI 108 provides a number of user-selectable actions (e.g., reinstate) that invoke an administrative application 28, such as any of those discussed above with reference to **Figure 4**.
